The project was born within the 2004 PEDPL (Port of Leixões Strategic Development Plan). The definition of a new cruise terminal has since then a double objective: improvement of the commercial efficiency and a better urban integration. It searches at the same time to endow the Leixões port of conditions to receive large cruise ships, up to 300 meters, and integrating functions and spaces with a urban vocation, that is, generating conditions of sociability with the surrounding urban community, now that the dependency bond between the city’s population towards the fishing activity is dissipated such as that between the port towards the canneries. It was sought to connect functions that would simultaneously interest port activities and the collective sense inherent to the city. It was also taken in consideration the fact that Leixões, a small port despite its strong capacity, could aim for spatial optimisation towards port activities.

The connection to the city throughout the south Pier, enabling the relationship formerly inexistent between the city of Matosinhos and the Port of Leixões, culminating in the Terminal’s cover/stand Public Space, not only as in a recreational meaning, but also in the sense of collective values and knowledge formation.

Porto Cruise Terminal is a small port complex, initiative of the Administração dos Portos do Douro e Leixões, located at the South jetty in Matosinhos, Portugal. The project integrates new buildings, berthing work and exterior spaces of public vocation. The main building magnetizes the complex sheltering several programmatic components: cruise ship terminal, marina facilities, the Science and Technology Park of the Sea of the University of Porto, event rooms and a restaurant.

The work was divided in three stages, being concluded the initial: a new quay and the main building with public space in its direct surroundings, such as the ground floor and stand on the rooftop. Stage 2 is the street dignifying the connection to the city. Stage 3 is related to the marina settlement, the treatment of its fronts and the setup of a small support building with cafeteria.

The proposal is largely dependent on the main building, which constitutes a node between the 3 main functions: the new cruise ship quay, the new marina, and the new street linking to the city. It receives and sends dispatchers and addressees of these three “motivations” as it includes in the seaside the departure/arrivals rooms and marina facilities, and in the land side the Science and Technology Park of the Sea of the University of Porto, event spaces, a small restaurant and parking. Those urban functions and the large public terrace on the roof have together a wide spectrum of collective activities.